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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SHENYANG 000115

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DEPARTMENT FOR INR, EAP/CM, EAP/K

E.O. 12958: DECL: TEN YEARS AFTER KOREAN UNIFICATION  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PGOV](#) [KN](#) [KS](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: DPRK-INTERNAL: RASON TURBINES, MORE PUST DELAYS,  
SINUJU AND PARK PONG JU GOSSIP

Classified By: ACTING CONSUL GENERAL DAVID BRIZZEE.  
REASONS: 1.4 (b)/(d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: DPRK and ROK officials are expected to meet soon in Shenyang to discuss a humanitarian group's proposal to privately finance and install a 750 KW wind turbine in Rason. The opening of Pyongyang's first private university has been pushed back until 2008 as a result of export licensing concerns and UNSCR 1718, which have also prompted a recalibration of certain aspects of the project. Post contacts have suggested that would-be Sinuiju governor Yang Bin, imprisoned by the PRC in 2003, may have been released from a Shenyang prison. Rumors about former DPRK Premier Park Pong Ju's dismissal abound; one now circulating in PRC-DPRK trade circles suggests that Park's fall stemmed, in part, from a bribe from a Chinese businessman. END SUMMARY.

TURBINES FOR RASON?

2. (C) North Korean and ROK Ministry of Unification (MOU) officials are to meet this week in Shenyang to consult on a private wind turbine project in Rason, a Yanbian-based Amcit involved in the project's management told Poloff on June 20. Proposed by a multinational NGO currently engaged in a number of grass-roots humanitarian endeavors in Rason, the project involves the construction of a privately financed 750 KW wind turbine in Rason that would, after scheduled completion in September, connect to the local electricity grid and, ultimately, lay the groundwork for a multi-turbine wind farm capable of powering an estimated 150,000-200,000 households in the area. Officials of the windy North Korean locality are quite interested in the turbine and its potential electrical payoff, according to the Amcit. Pyongyang last year sanctioned the construction of a measuring tower--completed in August 2006--for the turbine.

3. (C) The current iteration of the project hinges, in good part, on MOU approval because the group has proposed using a South Korean-made turbine, which would be shipped to Rason and trucked to the final destination, on top of a ridge overlooking the area, the Amcit said. But should MOU approval fall through, the group's fallback plan envisions purchasing a Chinese-manufactured turbine that would then be transported by land to Rason. Either way, the group plans to help reinforce some of Rason's roads, which, at present, will be unable to accommodate the weight of the

turbine and associated materials for the latter's foundation.

PYONGYANG'S PRIVATE UNIVERSITY DELAYED, AGAIN

14. (C) The opening of Pyongyang's first private university, the Pyongyang University of Science and Technology (PUST), has been pushed back to spring 2008, another in a long succession of delays. PUST's Yanji-based project manager, David Kim, told Poloff on June 19 that although eighty percent of the school's construction is now complete, the critical next phase--installing a computer network and importing laboratory and other technological equipment--has stalled, primarily because of export licensing concerns. Kim and his colleagues are currently waiting for more progress in the Six-Party process before submitting the necessary export license applications to the Department of Commerce. In the meantime, the PUST team is adapting previous plans for the school; the project's original plan to supply each student with a laptop computer equipped with wireless technology, for instance, has now been foregone as a result of UNSCR 1718, which proscribes laptops. North Korean officials at the Ministry of Education, Kim's primary interlocutors in the DPRK, have remained mum on the delays (and reasons therefor) during his trips to Pyongyang over the past several months.

WOULD-BE SINUIJU GOVERNOR RELEASED?

15. (C) The Chinese-Dutch business magnate selected by Pyongyang in 2002 to govern Sinuiju's special economic zone may have been released from a Chinese prison in Shenyang, where he had been sentenced in 2003 to nearly two decades

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on fraud charges. (The PRC's move was interpreted by many at the time as a signal of Chinese displeasure with Pyongyang's selection.) Two North Korea scholars in Shenyang and Yanbian told Poloff separately in recent weeks that they believe Yang Bin has been released, presumably thanks to his Dutch nationality and the passage of a decent interval. One of the scholars--LU Chao, a DPRK expert at the Liaoning Academy of Social Sciences--told Poloff on May 31 that he believes he spotted Yang in Pyongyang during a trip to North Korea in late May. According to Lu, the man he is almost certain was Yang--whom he had previously known from the latter's more heady Shenyang days--was staying at Lu's hotel and was whisked around by four North Koreans. Lu said Yang hurriedly turned his head and was whisked off by his retinue when Lu tried to greet him.

PARK PONG-JU GOSSIP: MORE GRIST FOR THE MILL

16. (C) A rumor circulating in PRC-DPRK trade circles speculates that former DPRK Premier Park Pong-ju may have been dismissed, in part, because of corruption involving a Chinese businessman. LIU Chensheng, a former Shenyang trade official who facilitates PRC-DPRK trade/investment and visits North Korea 1-2 times per month as part of the Liaoning Civilian Entrepreneur Association's Korean Liaison Office, told Poloff on May 31 that Park is rumored to have taken a bribe from a Chinese businessman seeking to secure an investment deal in the DPRK. According to the rumor, Liu said, problems arose when the businessman suddenly disappeared after the Central Committee of the Worker's Party had approved the deal, resulting in an embarrassing loss of several million dollars in potential revenue. Park, according to this rumor, is said to have been removed soon afterward as a warning to other cadres. (NOTE: Post continues to hear a wide range of other rumors about Park's dismissal and passes this along for what it is (or not) worth. END NOTE.)  
BRIZZEE